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INTRODUCTION

In the Fall of 2000 a team consisting of staff from the Institute for Human Services Research (IHSR) of Lansing, Michigan and MGT of America in Tallahassee, Florida conducted a survey for the Michigan Department of Career Development. The survey gathered information about the post-program experiences of people who had been in Work First. Two groups of former Work First participants were surveyed; ones with cases that closed between October 1, 1998 and December 31, 1998 and those whose cases closed between October 1, 1999 and June 30, 2000. The survey addressed topics such as current employment and its duration, wages being earned, additional training being offered by employers, health insurance coverage, reasons for not being employed, quality of life, and the impact of being involved in Work First.

This report provides a picture of the respondents' experiences through the use of graphs and charts highlighting significant information in the text. The number of responses to each question are provided at the end of the report in Attachment 1.

METHODOLOGY

The survey instrument was developed using the survey conducted the previous year (1999) as the basis. The survey consisted of 33 questions, some forced choice and some where the respondents were asked to fill in an answer such as the number of months or years they have worked for their current employer, the amount of money they received from government agencies in the last month, the number of hours they work a week and their hourly wage amount. They were also asked to describe their job title or responsibilities. The open-ended responses were coded and grouped by IHSR staff. The survey was formatted in such a way that it would be easy to read and respond to the questions.

Surveys were sent on December 8, 2000, with 1,600 sent to the Population I group and 9,500 to the Population II group. The respondents were given the option of completing the paper survey and mailing it back or calling a toll-free number. A considerable number, 320, took advantage of the ability to call in their responses. From January 2, 2001 to January 11, 2001 MGT of America staff called people from whom responses had not been received. Table 1 provides information about the number of surveys sent, received and the response rate for each group. The overall response rate for the deliverable surveys is 14.7 percent. The overall response rate for the total population of 11,100 is 13.2 percent.

Table 1: Response Rates

	POPULATION I: CASES CLOSED OCTOBER 1, 1998 TO DECEMBER 31, 1998 (1,600 SURVEYS MAILED)	POPULATION II: CASES CLOSED OCTOBER 1, 1999 TO JUNE 30, 2000 (9,500 SURVEYS MAILED)
MAIL RESPONSES	94 surveys	692 surveys
TELEPHONE RESPONSES	50 surveys	632 surveys
TOTAL COMPLETED SURVEYS	144 surveys	1,324 surveys
UNDELIVERABLE SURVEYS	198 surveys	793 surveys
RESPONSE RATE (DELIVERABLE)	10%	15%
RESPONSE RATE (TOTAL)	9%	14%

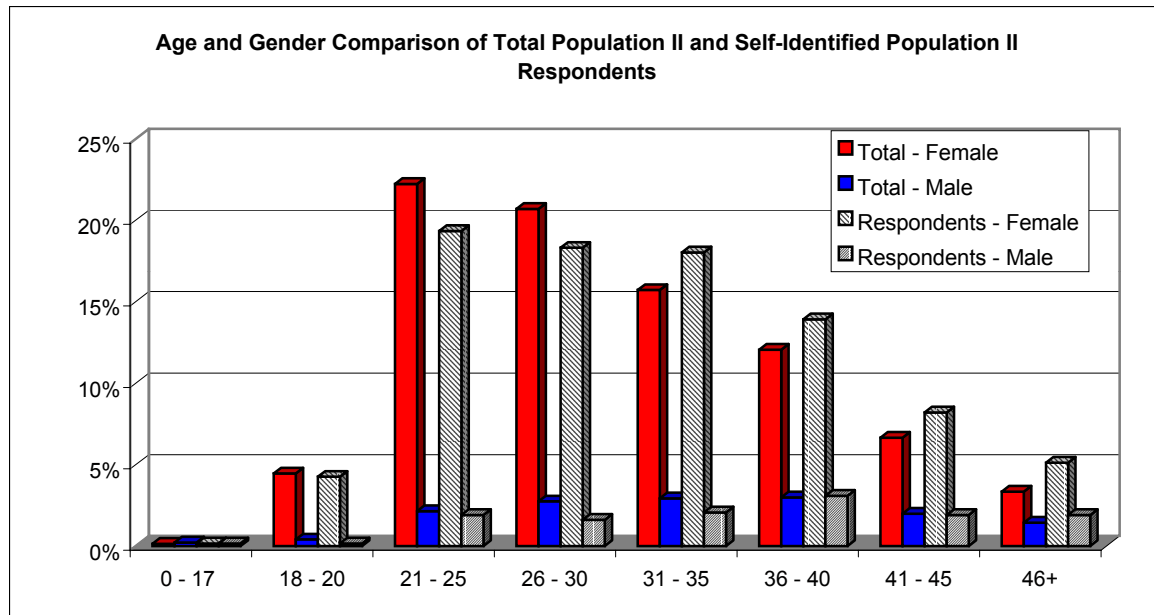
Response to the survey was both widespread and substantively rich. Survey respondents in the lower socio-economic strata usually do not provide a great deal of feedback beyond simple yes/no responses and are not particularly likely to respond to surveys of this nature. The survey respondents for the Michigan Work First program, however, were the most expressive that MGT has witnessed for this type of survey. Many clearly have strong opinions about the program and were willing to relay these opinions through both phone and mail surveys. While it is unclear whether this is a regional effect (most of MGT's survey work has been conducted in the south) or specific to this particular program, the depth of the comments received was highly unusual for a workforce development survey.

In addition to the survey, a focus group was held on January 16, 2001 in Lansing. Six former Work First participants attended and provided anecdotal information about their experiences in the program and their subsequent employment. A summary of the discussion is provided in Attachment 2.

DEMOGRAPHICS

An analysis was conducted to determine whether the respondents to the survey were demographically similar to the entire Work First population of closed cases from the designated time periods. The respondents had the option of completing the survey anonymously which led to a smaller pool of individuals for which the comparison could be made. None of the Population I respondents chose to be identified. Slightly less than half of the Population II respondents chose to complete the survey anonymously (48%).

A comparison of the 683 self-identified Population II respondents with all 12,839 individuals in the Population II database was conducted to determine how representative they are. Having a representative sample is critical to being able to generalize the results of the survey over the entire population. Fortunately, the correlation between the two groups is extremely close for age, gender and the types of services they were receiving as of November 22, 2000. The following graph and table provide information from these comparisons.



Another way to compare the groups is to look at whether they have active FIA cases¹. Although the self-identified group has a slightly higher proportion of active cases, the rates are still similar.

Total Population II and Population II Self-identified Respondents' Program Comparison as of 11/22/00							
Family Independence Program	Food Stamps	Medicaid: Healthy Kids and Pregnant Women	Medicaid: Caretaker relatives and families with dependent children	Total Population II		Self-identified Population II Respondents	
				Individuals	Percent	Individuals	Percent
			x	2,032	16.7%	111	16.8%
		x		503	4.1%	28	4.2%
	x		x	4,511	37.0%	239	36.2%
	x	x		608	5.0%	24	3.6%
	x	x	x	261	2.1%	24	3.6%
x	x			3,059	25.1%	178	26.9%
Other Combinations				1,206	9.9%	57	8.6%

	Active FIA Cases		Inactive FIA Cases	
	Individuals	Percent	Individuals	Percent
Total Population II	9,971	78%	2,852	22%
Self-Identified Population II Respondents	575	84%	108	15%

¹ Active FIA cases are those for which the person is currently enrolled in an FIA program. The FIA programs in which the respondents were enrolled include Family Independence Program (FIP), food stamps, child care, Medicaid, and Healthy Kids.

A second type of analysis was done to determine whether the self-identified respondents differed significantly from those who chose to be anonymous. This analysis also revealed a close correlation between key factors, thus insuring that generalization of the results is appropriate. The proportion of employed and unemployed respondents is virtually identical between the two groups with the proportion of those with another wage earner in the household just slightly less (3.4% difference) in the anonymous group. The largest difference occurs between those receiving some sort of governmental assistance, with 40% in the self-identified group and 54% in the anonymous group receiving some sort of public aid.

Are you currently employed at a job or business?	Does any one else in your household have a paying job?	Do you or any one in your household receive help from FIA or other government agencies?	Self-identified	Percent	Anonymous	Percent
Yes	Yes	Yes	42	6.2%	72	9.7%
Yes	Yes	No	145	21.4%	109	14.7%
Yes	No	Yes	145	21.4%	211	28.4%
Yes	No	No	184	27.2%	179	24.1%
No	Yes	Yes	25	3.7%	42	5.7%
No	Yes	No	33	4.9%	21	2.8%
No	No	Yes	56	8.3%	78	10.5%
No	No	No	46	6.8%	31	4.2%
			676	100.0%	743	100.0%
Employed			516	76.3%	571	76.9%
Unemployed			160	23.7%	172	23.1%
Another person in household employed			245	36.2%	244	32.8%
Receiving assistance			268	39.6%	403	54.2%

SURVEY RESULTS

The former Work First participants who responded to the survey provided information about their employment status, job training and skill enhancement, health care coverage, quality of life and the impact of Work First on their lives. This report is organized according to these categories. Each topic contains an analysis of the survey results and then provides graphic illustrations of the survey responses. To allow for direct comparison between the two groups, the graphs are based on percent of respondents since Population I is so much smaller than Population II. Graphs and tables provide the survey question number for reference to the survey results in Attachment 1. There are two attachments to the report. The first is the survey itself with the total number of responses and percentages to each question for both Populations I and II. The second is a summary of the Lansing focus group.

EMPLOYMENT STATUS

Respondents were asked several questions about their employment status to determine the rate of employment, types of employment, whether employment is full- or part-time, and reasons for being unemployed. Responses received from both populations were quite consistent for each of the survey questions in this category.

The percentage of respondents currently employed are similar for both populations, with roughly three quarters having jobs. The vast majority of employed respondents hold only one job (92%), and 7% work at two different jobs.

Over half of the respondents (56% of Population I and 66% of Population II) have been in their current jobs for less than one year, with over 30% in each group having worked for six months or less for their current employer. The average time respondents reported having worked for their current employer was 16.6 months for Population I and 15.8 months for Population II. The differences in longevity by population were quite dramatic for individuals working between six months and one year, as well as for those who have worked for the same employer for more than two years. The difference in the latter comparison was anticipated due to the difference in the duration of time that has elapsed since the cases were closed for each population group.

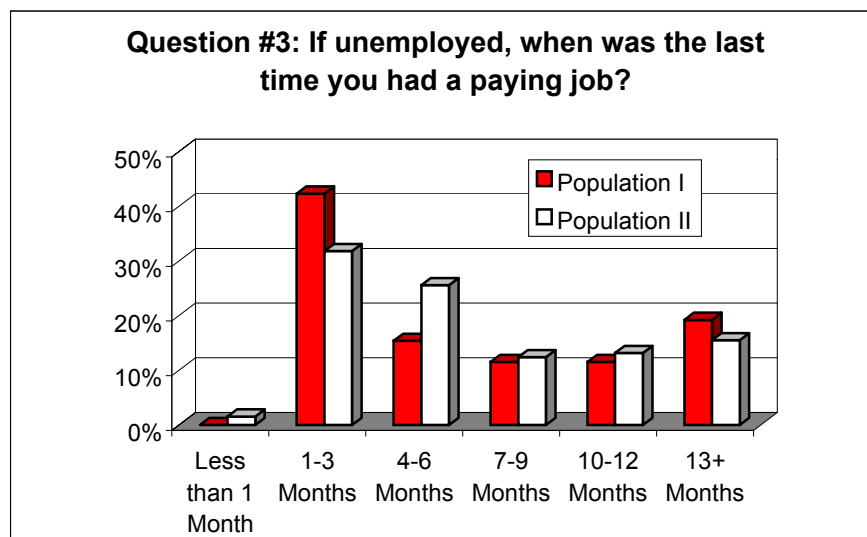
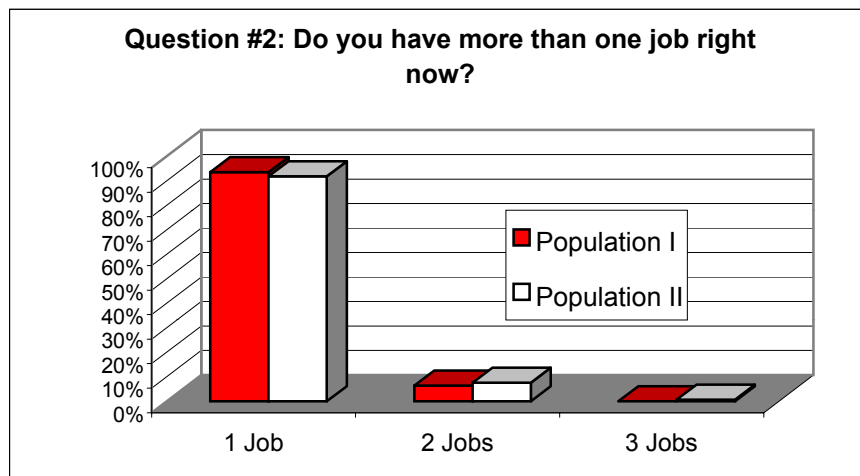
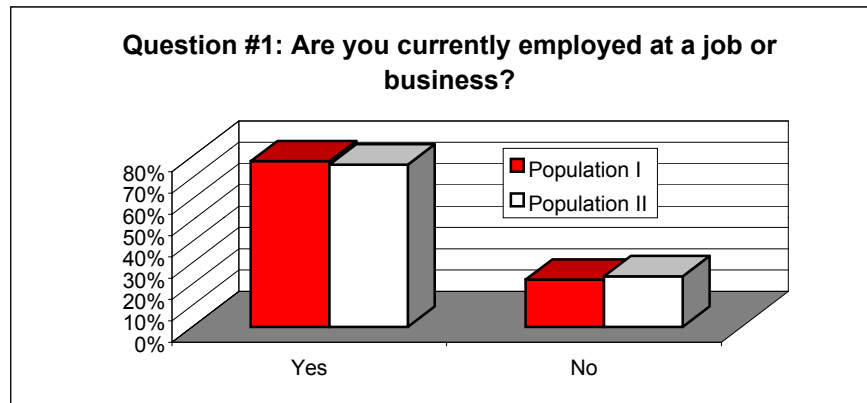
Hourly wages reported by employed respondents ranged from below minimum wage (\$5.15) to over \$25.00 per hour. Seven percent of employed respondents reported an hourly wage less than minimum wage, while 14% reported an hourly wage of twice this rate. The average wage reported by respondents was \$8.78 for Population I and \$8.27 for Population II. Three percent of employed Population I respondents and seven percent of employed Population II respondents reported earning wages below the minimum wage of \$5.15 per hour.

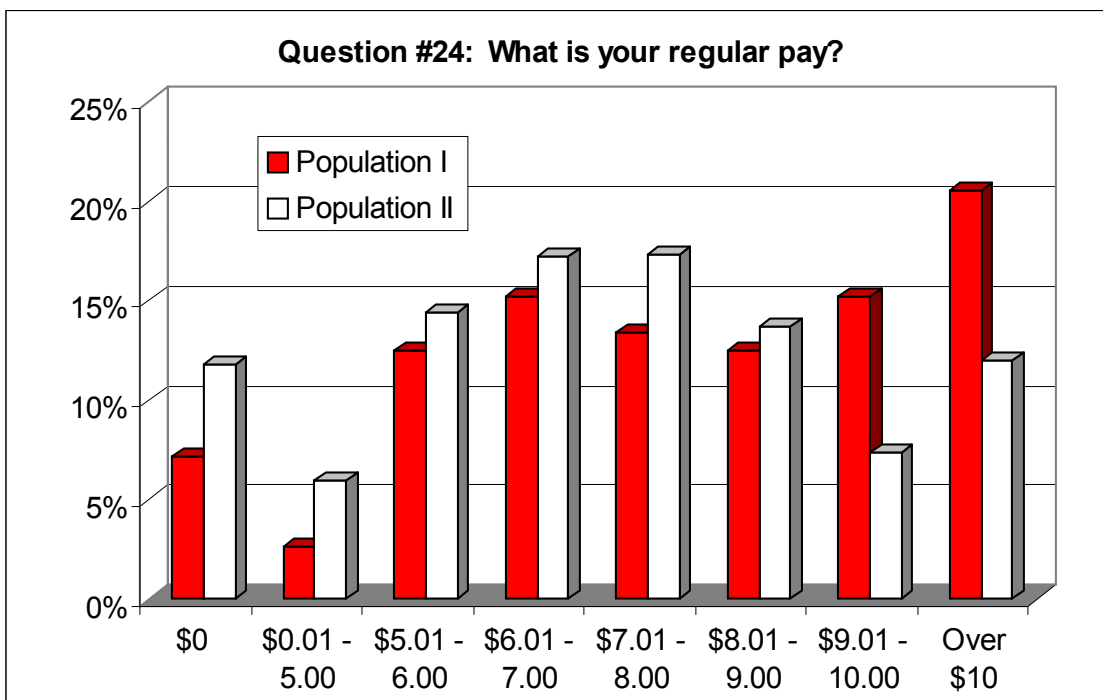
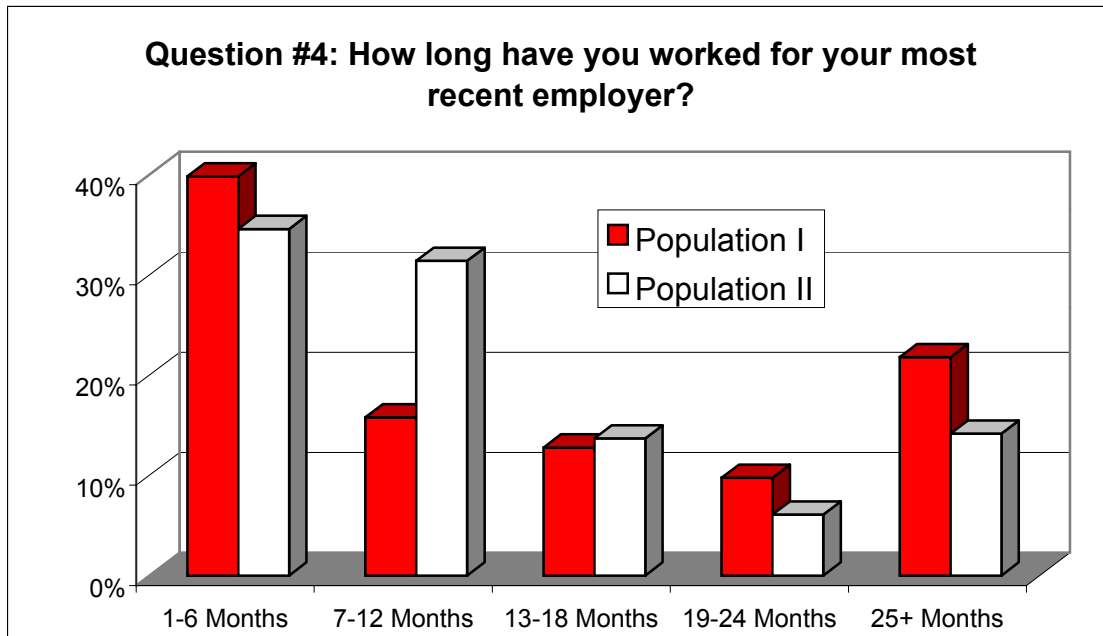
The survey asked two questions pertaining to the types of jobs held by the respondents. The top five *most recent* jobs were 1) Cashier/Customer Service, 2) Manufacturing-Light Industrial, 3) Health Care/Medical, 4) Administrative/Support Services/Clerk and 5) Restaurant/Food Service. The top five jobs that respondents *reported holding within the past year* were 1) Restaurant/Food Service, 2) Manufacturing-Light Industrial, 3) Cashier/Customer Service, 4) Health Care/Medical and 5) Administrative/Support Services/Clerk.

The number of hours worked per week is quite similar across the two populations. Over half of the employed respondents in each group reported working forty or more hours per week. Approximately ten percent are employed less than twenty hours per week. The average hours respondents reported working per week was 36 hours for both Population I and II.

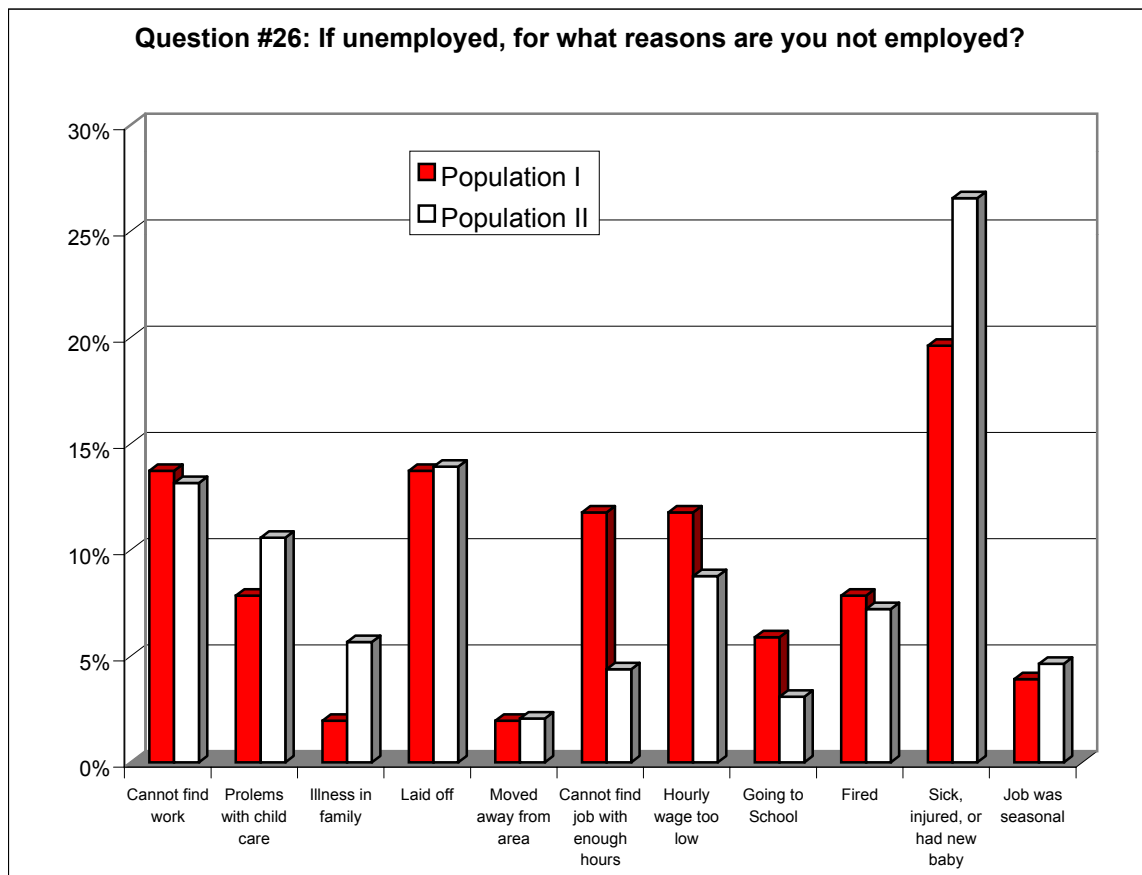
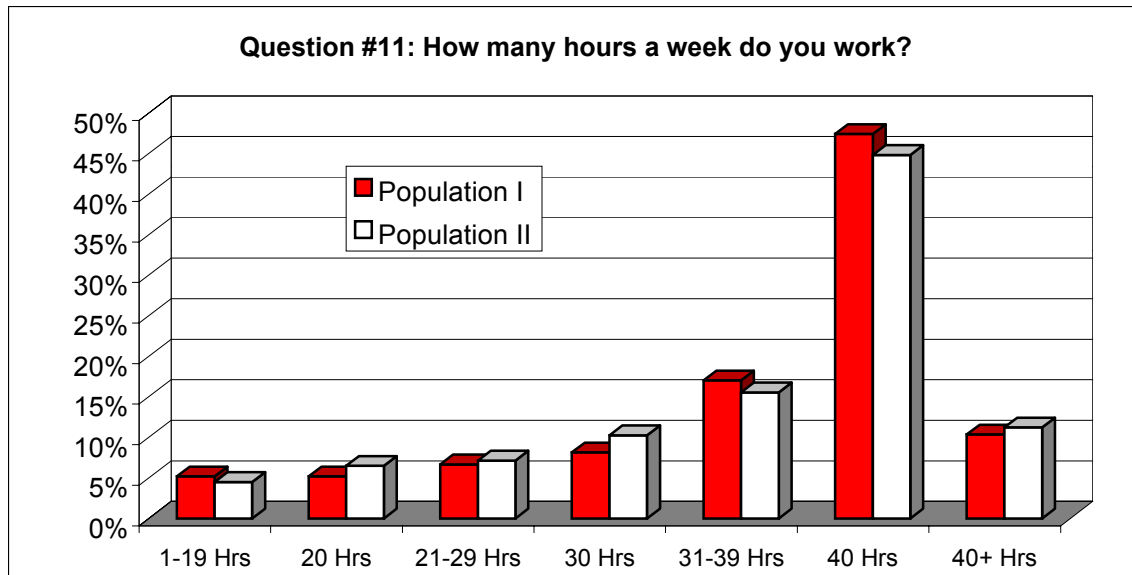
The responses provided by unemployed respondents indicate that over half have been without a paying job for six months or less. Nineteen percent of Population I respondents and 16% of those in Population II reported being without a paying job for more than one year. The average time respondents reported being unemployed was 8 months for Population I and 8.5 months for Population II.

The most commonly cited reason for unemployment was illness, injury or the birth of a new baby. The inability to find work, layoffs, low hourly wages and inadequate hours were also cited in more than 10 percent of the responses.



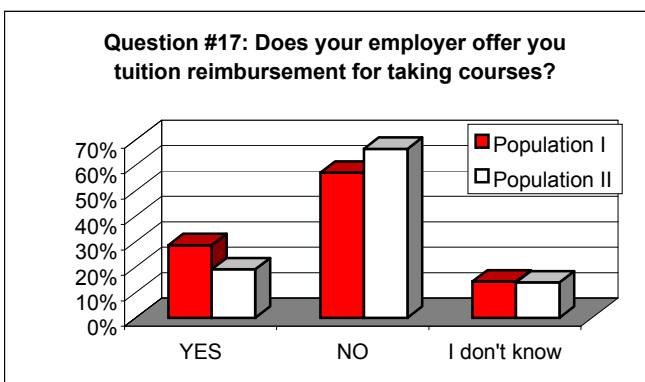
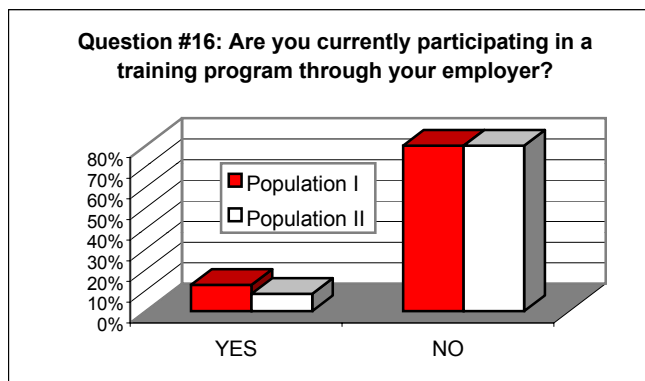
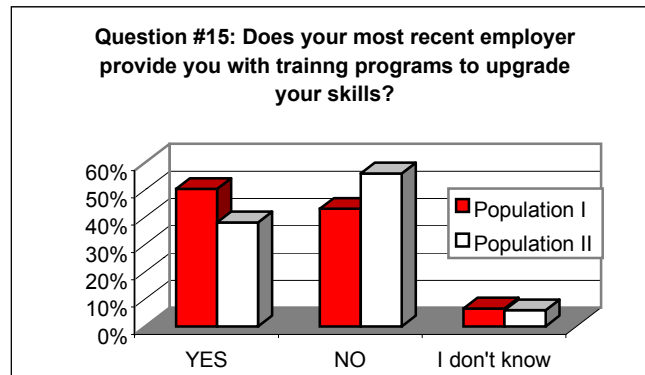


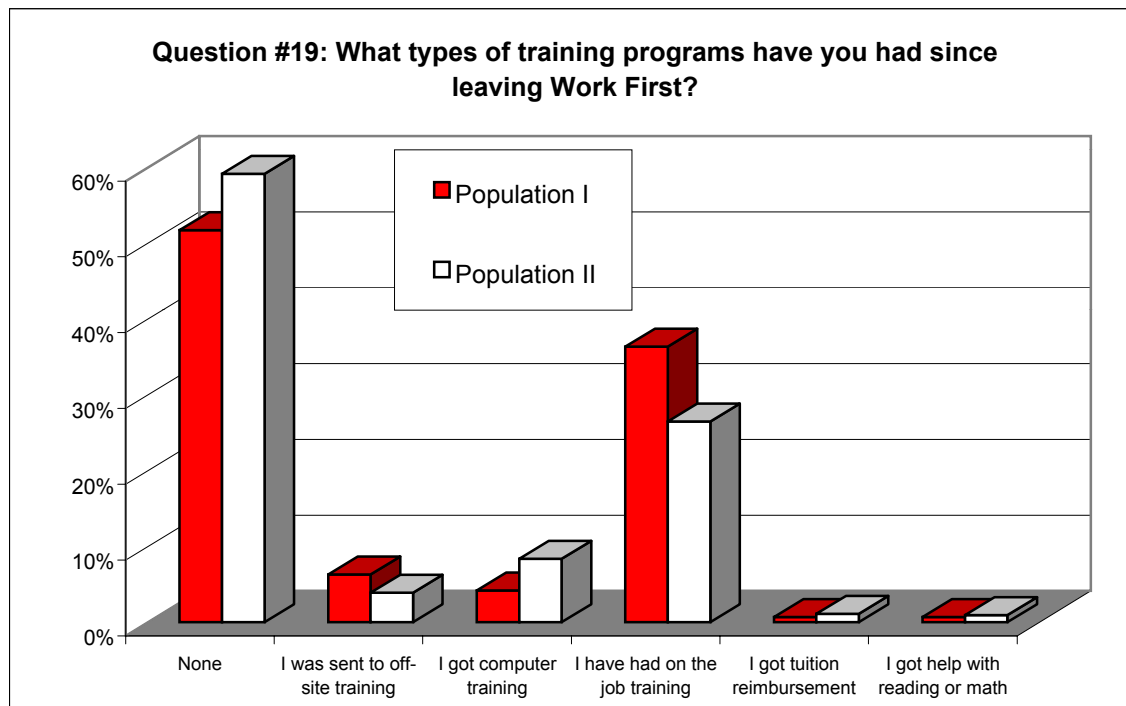
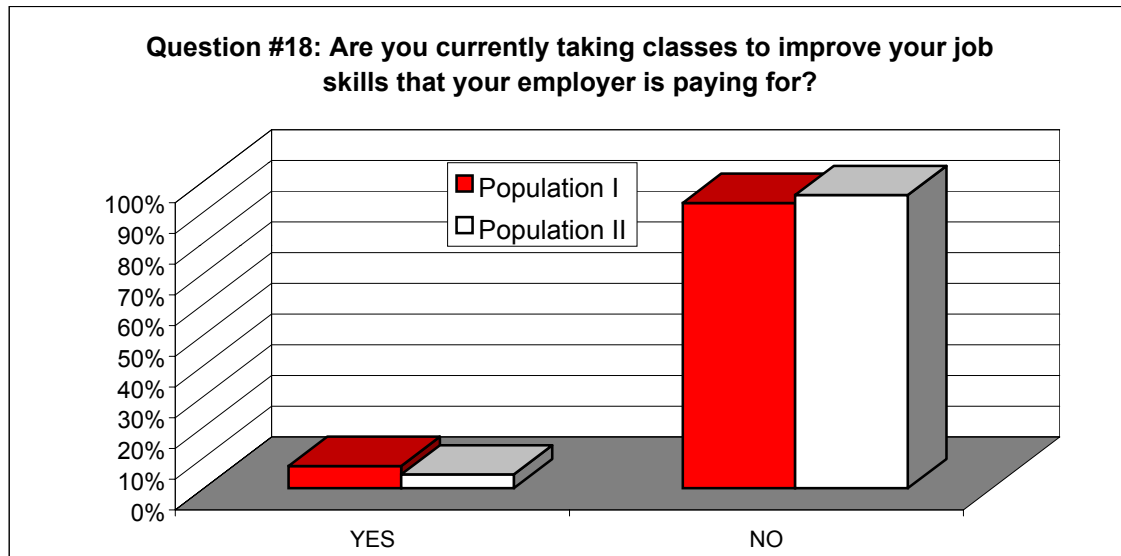
	Question #5: How would you describe your most recent job title or responsibilities?		Question #14: If you worked for another employer in the past year, how would you describe the job or responsibilities?	
	Number of Respondents	Percent of Total Valid Responses	Number of Respondents	Percent of Total Valid Responses
Cashier/Customer Service	99	15.2%	45	13.7%
Manufacturing - Light Industrial	96	14.7%	49	14.9%
Health Care/Medical	92	14.1%	43	13.1%
Administrative/Support Services/Clerk	71	10.9%	36	10.9%
Restaurant/Food Services	64	9.8%	55	16.7%
Child Care	21	3.2%	12	3.6%
Retail/Sales	21	3.2%	15	4.6%
Hospitality/Hotel Services	20	3.1%	7	2.1%
Education/Teacher/Training	18	2.8%	5	1.5%
Professional Cleaning Services	14	2.1%	7	2.1%
Accounting/Bookkeeping/Payroll	13	2.0%	5	1.5%
Supervisor/Manager/Crew Leader	13	2.0%	4	1.2%
Construction	12	1.8%	6	1.8%
Homemaker/Chore Services	11	1.7%	2	0.6%
Manufacturing - Skilled Trade	11	1.7%	6	1.8%
Stock/Inventory	11	1.7%	4	1.2%
Other	11	1.7%	5	1.5%
Manufacturing - Technical	8	1.2%	1	0.3%
Warehouse/Shipping/Receiving/Packaging	8	1.2%	6	1.8%
Farming/Grounds Work	8	1.2%		0.0%
Finance/Banking	6	0.9%	1	0.3%
Driver/Transportation	6	0.9%	2	0.6%
Security Guard	5	0.8%	2	0.6%
Job Coach/Employment Consulting	4	0.6%	4	1.2%
Advertising/Marketing/Public Relations	2	0.3%	1	0.3%
U.S. Census	2	0.3%	5	1.5%
Cosmetology	2	0.3%	1	0.3%
Funeral Services	1	0.2%		0.0%
Public Office	1	0.2%		0.0%
Railroad	1	0.2%		0.0%
Total Number of Valid Responses	652	100.0%	329	100.0%



JOB TRAINING AND SKILL ENHANCEMENT AFTER WORK FIRST

The survey responses indicate that 39% of employers provide training programs to upgrade respondents' job skills. Population I respondents indicated a higher percentage of training through their employer (48%) than Population II (37%). Five percent of the respondents stated that their employers pay for classes they are taking to improve their job skills. Not surprisingly, the type of training most commonly received is on-the-job training, reported by 27% of the respondents.





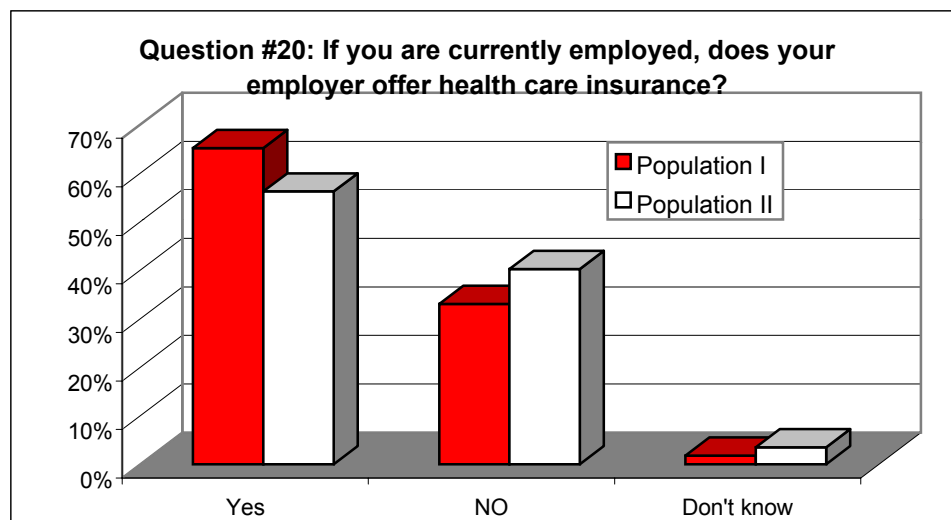
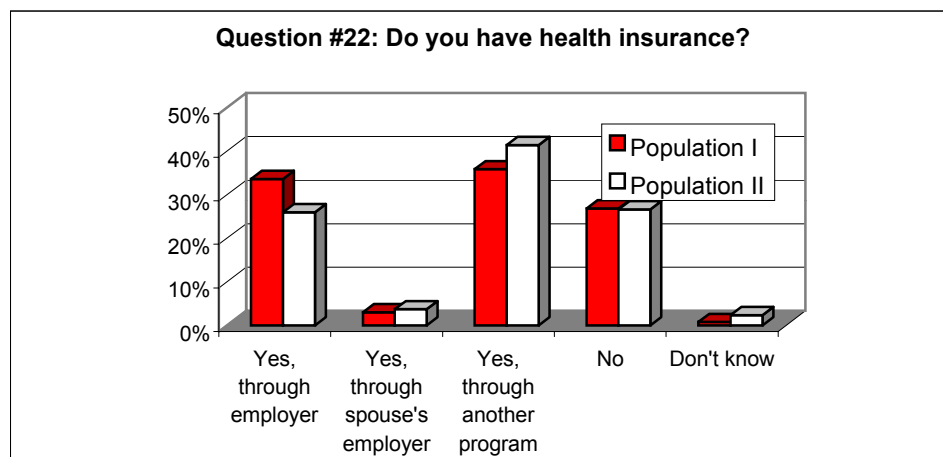
HEALTH CARE COVERAGE

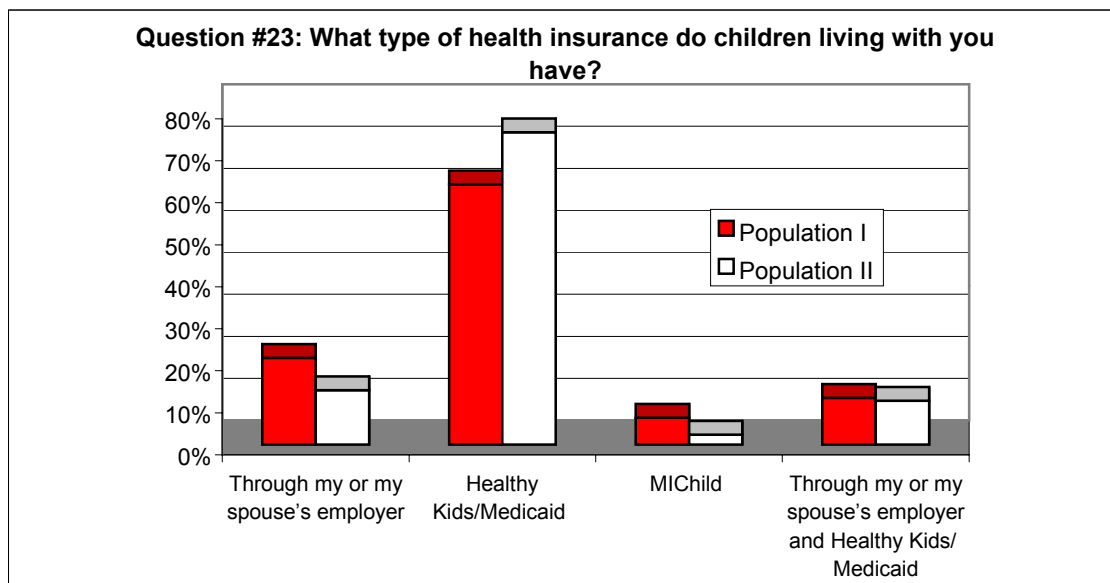
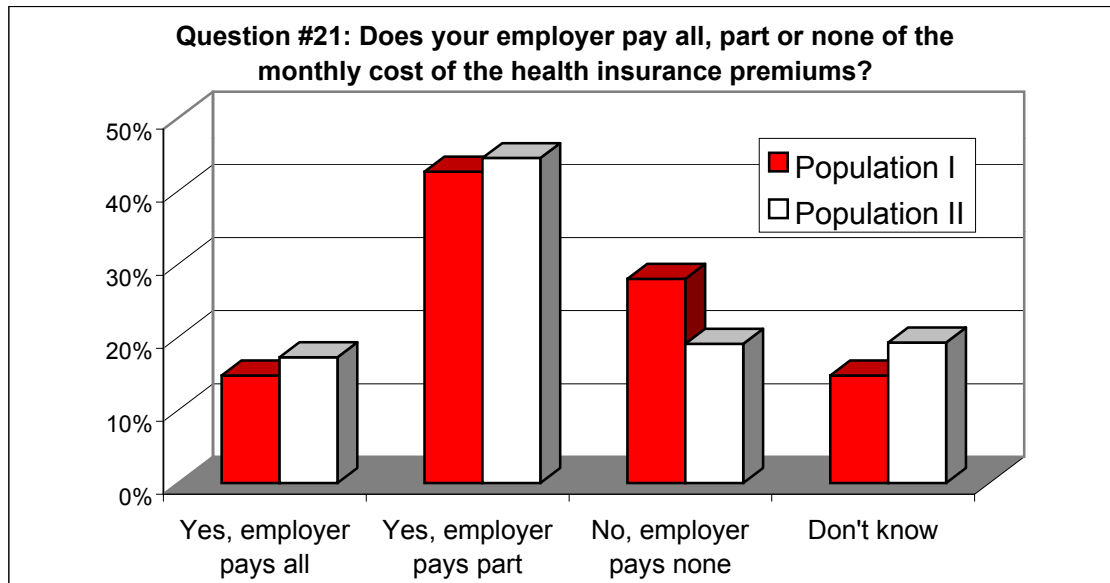
The majority of the respondents (41%) reported that they have publicly funded health care coverage. Almost one-third (30%) of the respondents have employer-based health coverage and 27% of them reported that they are uninsured. The currently employed respondents reported that 57% of their employers offer health coverage. The majority of employed respondents (44%) said their employers pay part of their monthly premium and 17% said their employers pay the whole premium. The majority of the children of the respondents are covered by Healthy Kids or

Medicaid (73%) with 11% having both employer-based coverage and Healthy Kids or Medicaid. Only 3% of the children were covered by MICHild. The most positive finding is that their rate of being uninsured is less than half of that of the children in the general population, 6% compared to 13%.

A few of the differences between Population I and Population II should be highlighted. The employed respondents in Population I reported that a higher percentage (65%) of their employers offer health insurance than did those in Population II (56%). The Population I respondents reported that a higher percentage of their employers (28%) did not pay any part of their premium than did those in Population II (19%).

Population I respondents reported that 21% of their children were covered under employer-based plans compared to only 13% in Population II. Conversely, 62% of the Population I respondents reported their children had Healthy Kids or Medicaid compared to 74% of Population II. Uninsured children accounted for 3% of the Population I respondents and 6% of Population II.

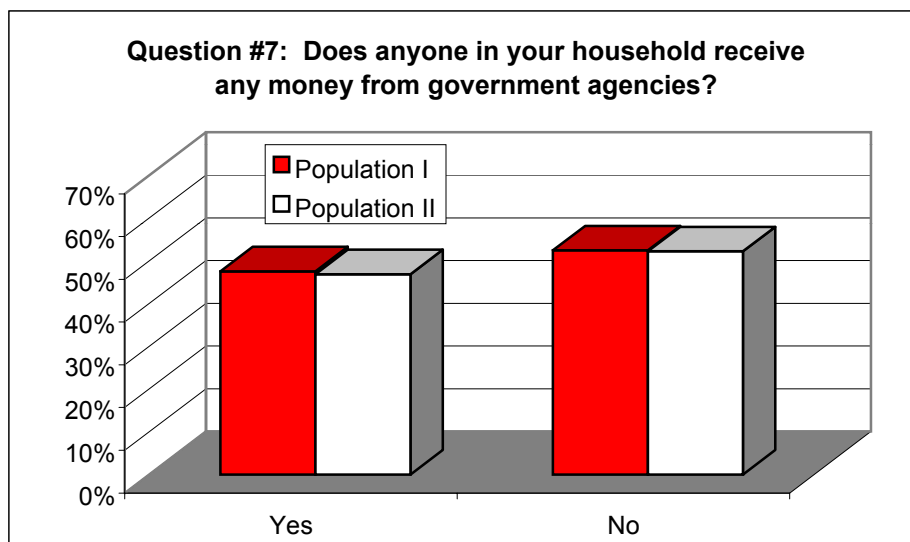
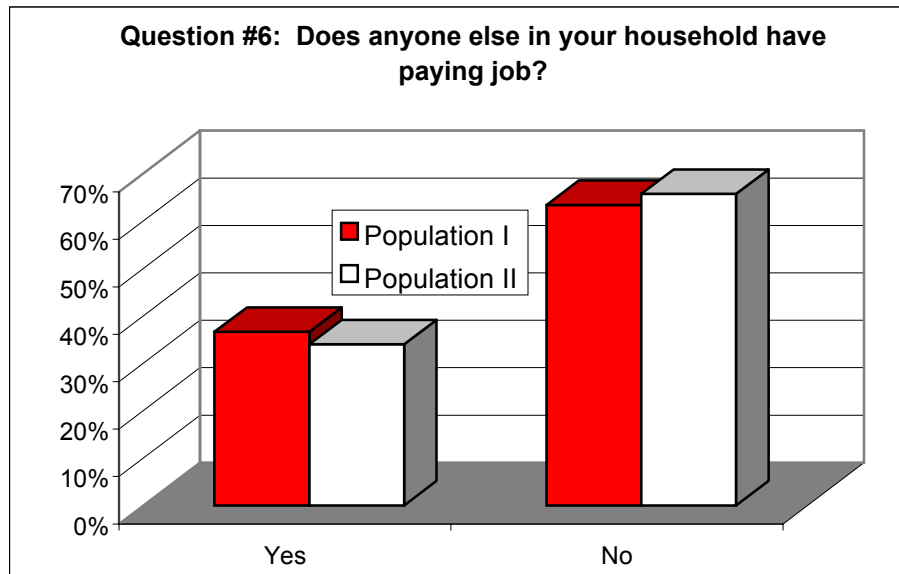


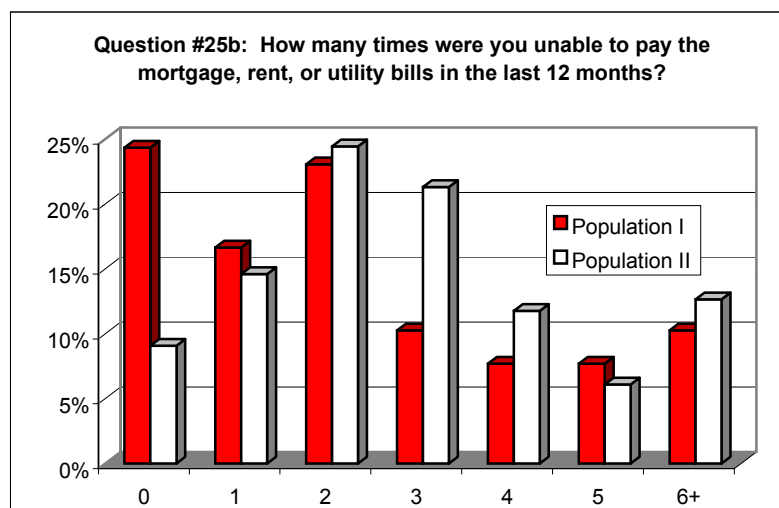
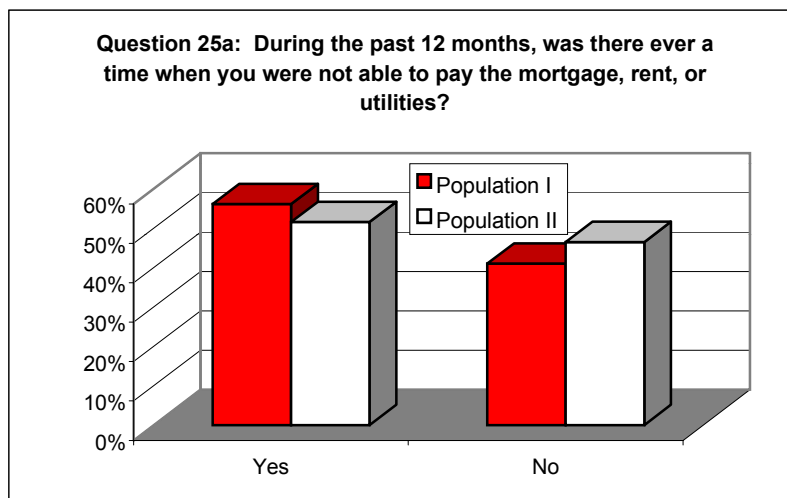
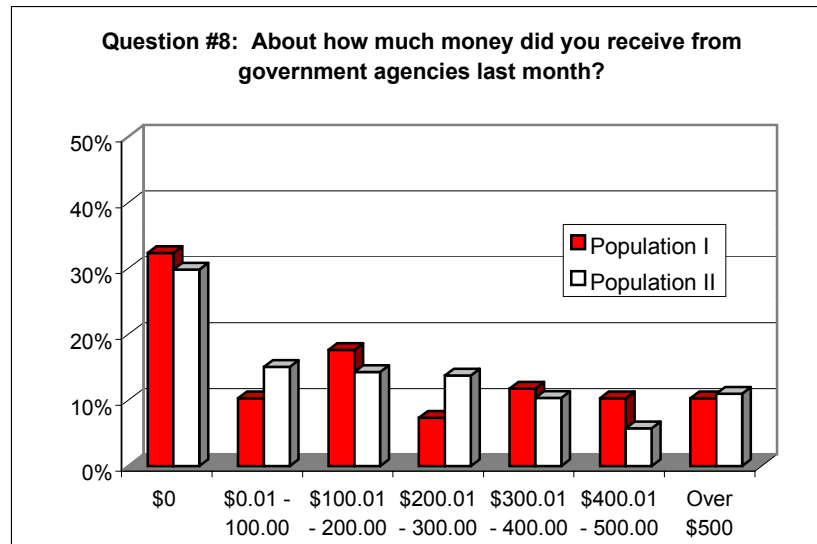


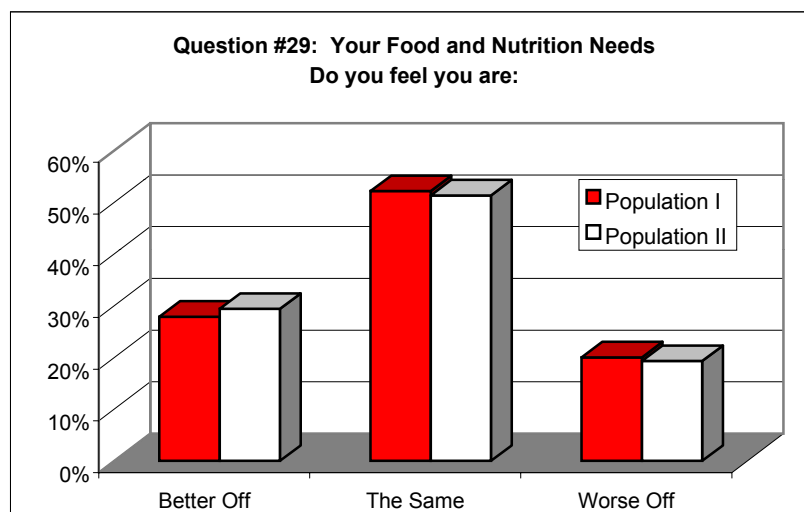
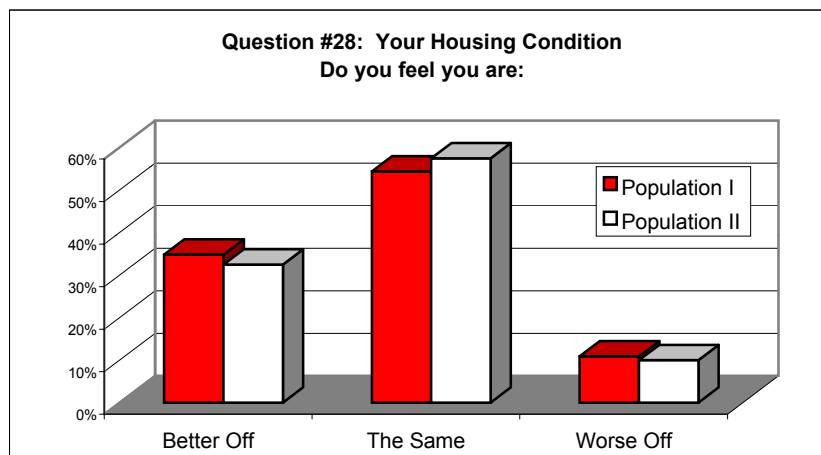
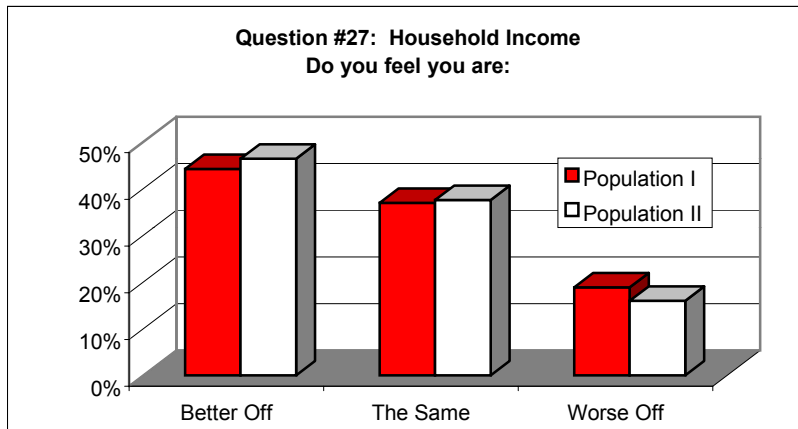
QUALITY OF LIFE

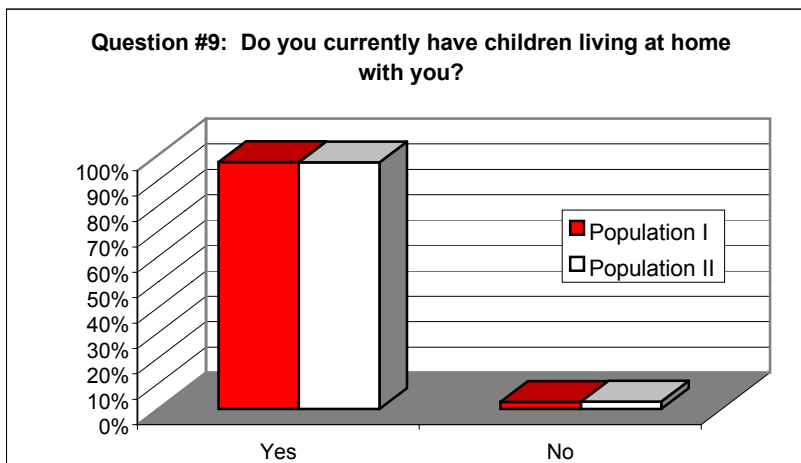
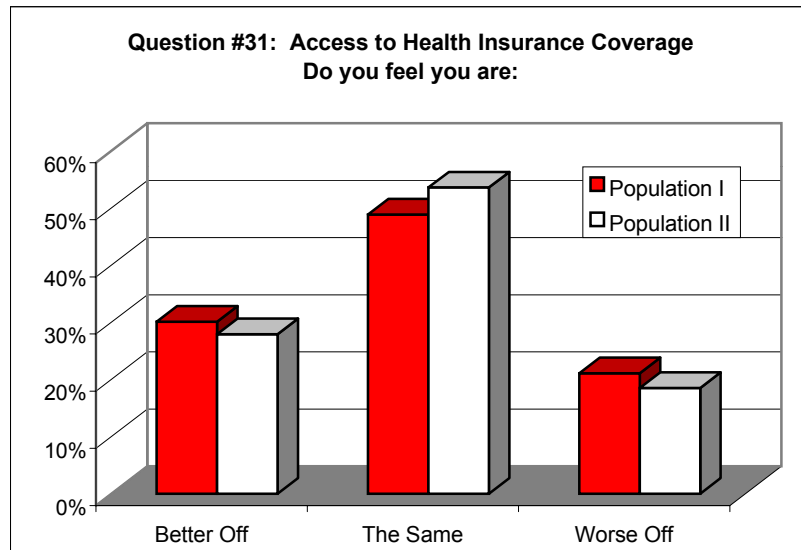
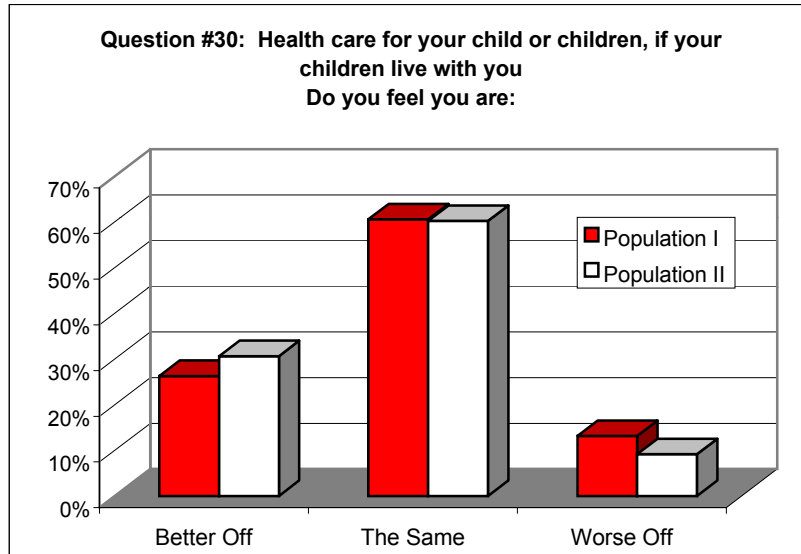
When asked whether someone else in the household had a paying job, 34% of the respondents reported yes. Fifty-two percent said they had trouble paying for housing or utilities in the past year. Forty-seven percent reported that they receive some sort of public aid. The average amount of public aid reported was \$311 per month for Population I and \$296 for Population II. Ninety-seven percent of the respondents have children living at home with 27% of those having children in child care and pre-school. Access to health care is reported to be worse by 19% of the respondents and better by 28%. The only difference of note between Population I and Population II is that 24% of Population I respondents reported that they had no time in the past twelve months when they were not able to pay a major bill where only 9% of Population II reported that

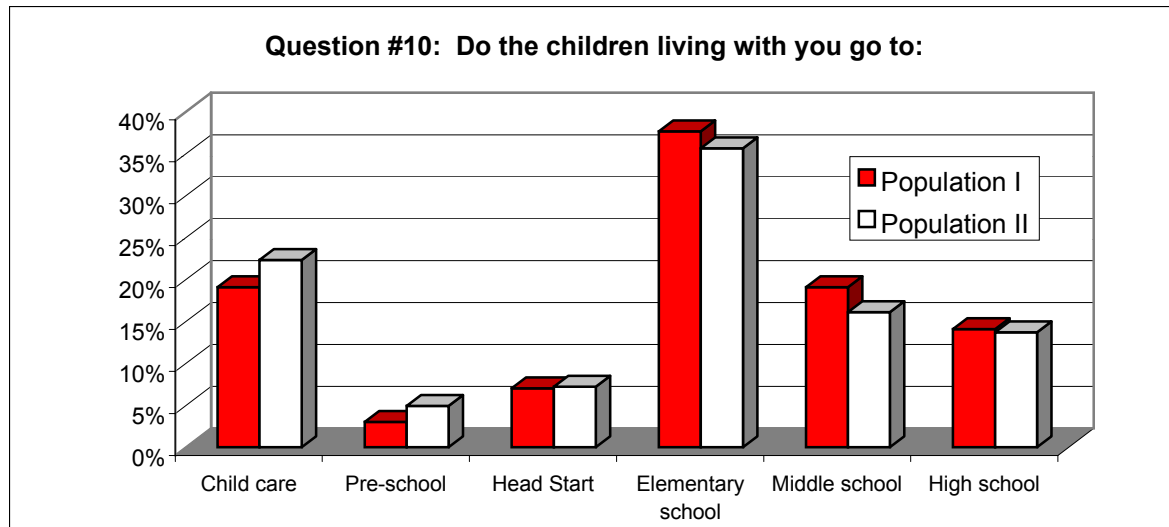
there were no times this occurred in the past 12 months. The average number of months in which they had trouble paying bills was 3.5 months for Population I and 3.4 months for Population II. Household income is reported to be better by almost half of the respondents, with 44% of Population I and 46% of Population II reporting they are better off. Over a third of the respondents reported their household income to be about the same, 37% of Population I and 38% of Population II. Fewer than a fifth of the respondents reported their income to be worse, 19% in Population I and 16% in Population II.









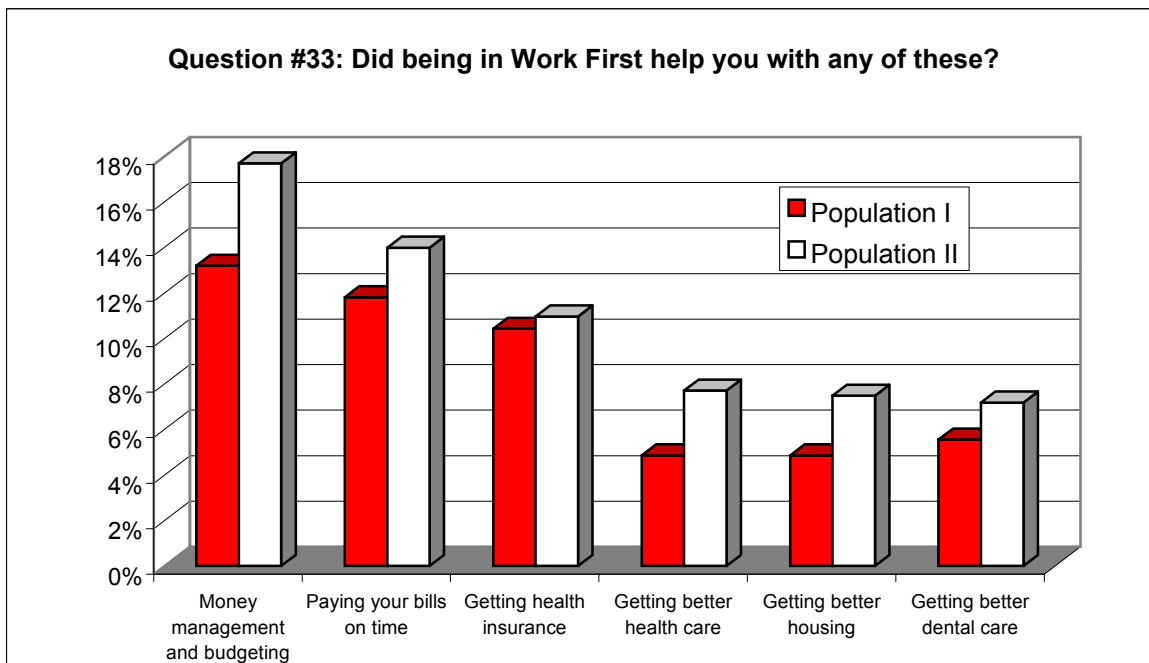
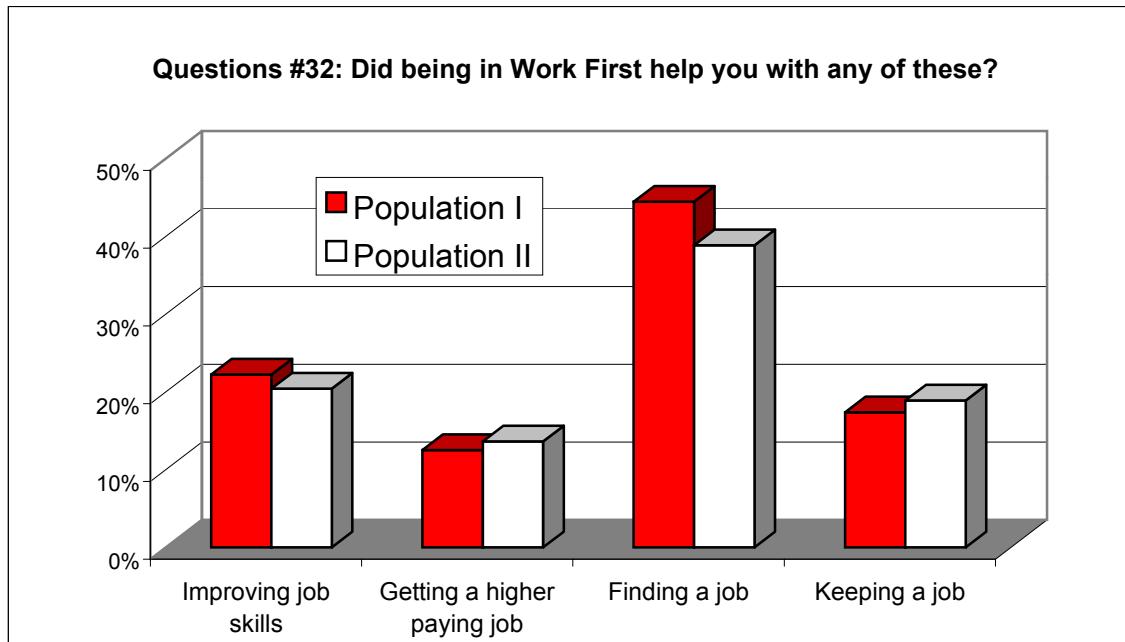


IMPACT OF WORK FIRST

The results reported in the quality of life section of this report demonstrate that for all of the measures, which include household income, housing condition, food and nutrition needs, health care access for their children and access to health insurance coverage, the majority of the respondents reported they were the same or better off. The results were virtually the same for both populations. Household income was the only measure for which the majority of the respondents said they were better off.

The respondents were asked about the helpfulness of their Work First experience. Thirty-nine percent reported that Work First helped them find a job. They also reported that being in Work First helped their families with money management and budgeting (17%) and paying their bills on time (14%). The six focus group participants all commented that the resume-writing process was extremely helpful to them because it assisted them with thinking about their job skills as well as providing them with a professional-looking resume. They also said that the practice interviews were beneficial.

The responses from Population I and II were very similar as to the helpfulness of Work First services. Differences appear between the groups when the respondents were asked how Work First affected other aspects of their lives. In general, for every aspect listed on the survey, a higher percentage of Population II respondents found them helpful with the largest difference occurring in money management and budgeting with 13% of Population I and 18% of Population II choosing that response.



Since each Michigan Works! Agency is a bit different, it should be noted that the results of the focus groups are based on experiences of people in Lansing only. From the small sample of people who comprised the Lansing focus group, it was evident that they had a sense of hopefulness about their future. When they were asked whether they felt Work First had changed their lives they all responded that it had. The participants found that Work First gave them opportunities they would not otherwise have had. One single mother indicated that she felt she would never have been able to be employed as anything but a bartender because of her education

and skill level. She said that before she went to Work First, employers looking for office staff would “laugh at her” when she gave them her resume which contained no relevant experience. She said that the assistance from Work First helped her in the preparation of her resume and that the computer training grant led to a career in the computer industry and promotion to a supervisory position. She said that Work First was a “great experience.” Another woman indicated that because of Work First, she has maintained a job and been off welfare for over a year. She said that she was “proud of herself” as a result of being off welfare and that this was the longest she had ever been in the same job. She indicated that she thought it was beneficial for young single mothers like her to be forced to get out into the work force. She felt they could benefit from Work First services.

ATTACHMENT 1: AGGREGATED SURVEY RESULTS

Michigan Work First Survey

FALL 2000

The purpose of this survey is to see how the Work First program helps people get better jobs.

Please circle the best answer to the following questions.

1. Are you currently employed at a job or business?

Yes

Population I= 112 (78%)

Population II= 1002 (76%)

No

Population I= 32 (22%)

Population II= 313 (24%)

2. Do you have more than one job right now?

I'm not currently employed

Population I= 1 (1%)

Population II= 4 (0%)

I have 2 jobs right now

Population I= 7 (5%)

Population II= 73 (6%)

Invalid Response

Population I=1 (1%)

Population II= 30 (2%)

I have 1 job right now

Population I= 103 (72%)

Population II= 889 (67%)

I have 3 jobs right now

Population I= 0 (0%)

Population II= 6 (0%)

3. If you are not employed, when was the last time you had a paying job? (Fill in the date.)**0-3 months**

Population I= 0 (0%)
Population II= 2 (0%)

4-6 months

Population I= 4 (3%)
Population II= 33 (2%)

10-12 months

Population I= 3 (2%)
Population II= 17 (1%)

1-3 months

Population I= 11(8%)
Population II= 41 (3%)

7-9 months

Population I= 3 (2%)
Population II= 16 (1%)

13 + months

Population I= 5 (3%)
Population II= 20 (2%)

4. How long have you worked for your most recent employer? (Fill in the number of months or years.)**0 months**

Population I= 11 (8%)
Population II= 72 (6%)

7-12 months

Population I= 21 (15%)
Population II= 397 (30%)

9-24 months

Population I= 13 (9%)
Population II= 77 (6%)

1-6 months

Population I= 53 (37%)
Population II= 437 (33%)

8-18 months

Population I= 17 (12%)
Population II= 173 (13%)

25+ months

Population I= 29 (20%)
Population II= 167 (13%)

5. How would you describe your most recent job title or responsibilities?

Results can be found on page 9 of the report.

6. Does any one else in your household have a paying job?**Yes**

Population I= 52 (36%)
Population II= 444 (34%)

I don't know

Population I= 0 (0%)
Population II= 4 (0%)

No

Population I= 90 (63%)
Population II= 858 (65%)

Invalid response

Population I= 2 (1%)
Population II= 17 (1%)

7. Do you or any one else in your household receive public assistance, welfare payments, food stamps, vouchers, SSI, or emergency help from FIA or other government agencies?**Yes**

Population I= 68 (47%)
Population II= 610 (46%)

I don't know

Population I= 0 (0%)
Population II= 12 (1%)

No

Population I= 75 (52%)
Population II= 680 (51%)

Invalid response

Population I= 1 (1%)
Population II= 21 (2%)

8. About how much money did you receive from government agencies last month?**\$0**

Population I= 22 (15%)
Population II= 182 (14%)

\$100.01-\$200.00

Population I= 12 (8%)
Population II= 87 (7%)

\$300.01-\$400.00

Population I= 8 (6%)
Population II= 63 (5%)

\$500.01+

Population I= 7 (5%)
Population II= 67 (5%)

\$0.01-\$100.00

Population I= 7 (5%)
Population II= 92 (7%)

\$200.01-\$300.00

Population I= 5 (3%)
Population II= 84 (6%)

\$400.01-\$500.00

Population I= 7 (5%)
Population II= 35 (3%)

9. Do you currently have children *living at home* with you?

Yes

Population I= 139 (97%)

Population II= 1275 (96%)

Invalid response

Population I= 1 (1%)

Population II=10 (1%)

10. Do they go to: (Circle all that apply)

Child care

Population I= 38 (26%)

Population II= 380 (29%)

Head Start

Population I= 14 (10%)

Population II= 123 (9%)

Middle school

Population I= 38 (26%)

Population II= 274 (21%)

I do not have children living at home

Population I= 0 (0%)

Population II= 1 (0%)

No

Population I= 4 (3%)

Population II= (3%)

Pre-school

Population I= 6 (4%)

Population II= 84 (6%)

Elementary School

Population I= 75 (52%)

Population II= 607 (46%)

High school

Population I= 28 (19%)

Population II= 233 (18%)

For the next set of questions, if you are not currently employed, answer them for your last job, your most recent employer.

11. How many hours a week do you usually work on the job you have now?

0 hours

Population I= 9 (6%)

Population II= 76 (6%)

20 hours

Population I= 7 (5%)

Population II= 81 (6%)

30 hours

Population I= 11 (8%)

Population II= 128 (10%)

40 hours

Population I= 64 (44%)

Population II= 559 (42%)

1-19 hours

Population I= 7 (5%)

Population II= 56 (4%)

21-29 hours

Population I= 9 (6%)

Population II= 89 (7%)

31-39 hours

Population I= 23 (16%)

Population II= 194 (15%)

40 + hours

Population I= 14 (10%)

Population II= 140 (11%)

12. How long have you worked for your most recent employer?**0 months**

Population I= 11 (8%)

Population II= 101 (8%)

4-6 months

Population I= 18 (13%)

Population II= 175 (13%)

10-12 months

Population I= 9 (6%)

Population II= 230 (17%)

19-24 months

Population I= 16 (11%)

Population II= 79 (6%)

37+ months

Population I= 7 (5%)

Population II= 86 (7%)

1-3 months

Population I= 33 (23%)

Population II= 273 (21%)

7-9 months

Population I= 13 (9%)

Population II= 148 (11%)

13-18 months

Population I= 17 (12%)

Population II= 163 (12%)

25-36 months

Population I= 20 (14%)

Population II= 68 (5%)

13. Did you work for other employers during the past year?**Yes**

Population I= 61 (42%)

Population II= 575 (43%)

No

Population I= 72 (50%)

Population II= 647 (49%)

14. If you worked for another employer, would you describe the job or responsibilities?Results can be found on page 9 of the report.

15. Does your most recent employer provide you with training programs to upgrade your skills?**Yes**

Population I= 69 (48%)

Population II= 484 (37%)

I don't know

Population I= 9 (6%)

Population II= 75 (6%)

No

Population I= 59 (41%)

Population II= 712 (54%)

Invalid response

Population I= 7 (5%)

Population II= 52 (4%)

16. Are you currently participating in a training program through your employer?**Yes**

Population I= 14 (10%)

Population II= 82 (6%)

I'm not currently employed

Population I= 0 (0%)

Population II= 1 (0%)

No

Population I= 59 (41%)

Population II= 906 (68%)

Invalid responses

Population I= 2 (1%)

Population II= 13 (1%)

17. Does your employer offer you tuition reimbursement for taking courses at community college or other educational institutions that will improve your skills in your job?**Yes**

Population I= 32 (22%)

Population II= 189 (14%)

I don't know

Population I= 16 (11%)

Population II= 138 (10%)

Invalid response

Population I= 0 (0%)

Population II= 12 (1%)

No

Population I= 64 (44%)

Population II= 658 (50%)

I'm not currently employed

Population I= 0 (0%)

Population II= 5 (0%)

18. Are you currently taking classes to improve your job skills that your employer is paying for?

<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>
Population I= 8 (6%)	Population I= 103 (72%)
Population II= 44 (3%)	Population II= 945 (71%)
<i>I am not currently employed</i>	<i>Invalid response</i>
Population I= 0 (0%)	Population I= 1 (1%)
Population II= 2 (0%)	Population II= 11 (1%)

19. What types of training programs have you had since leaving Work First? (Circle all that apply)

<i>None</i>	<i>I have had on the job training</i>
Population I= 74 (51%)	Population I= 52 (36%)
Population II= 806 (61%)	Population II= 361 (27%)
<i>I was sent to off-site training</i>	<i>I got tuition reimbursement</i>
Population I= 9 (6%)	Population I= 1 (1%)
Population II= 53 (4%)	Population II= 15 (1%)
<i>I got computer training</i>	<i>I got help with reading or math</i>
Population I= 6 (4%)	Population I= 1 (1%)
Population II= 114 (9%)	Population II= 13 (1%)

20. If you are currently employed, does your employer offer health care insurance?

<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>
Population I= 71 (49%)	Population I= 36 (25%)
Population II= 555 (42%)	Population II= 397 (30%)
<i>I don't know</i>	<i>I'm not currently employed</i>
Population I= 2 (1%)	Population I= 0 (0%)
Population II= 35 (3%)	Population II= 3 (0%)
<i>Invalid response</i>	
Population I= 3 (2%)	
Population II= 12 (1%)	

21. If your employer offers health insurance, does your employer pay all, part or none of the monthly cost of the premiums?

<i>Yes, my employer DOES pay for ALL of the monthly costs</i>	<i>Yes, my employer DOES pay for PART of the monthly costs</i>
Population I= 10 (7%)	Population I= 29 (20%)
Population II= 94 (7%)	Population II= 243 (18%)
<i>No, my employer DOES NOT pay for any of the monthly costs</i>	<i>I don't know</i>
Population I= 19 (13%)	Population I= 10 (7%)
Population II= 104 (8%)	Population II= 105 (8%)
<i>Invalid response</i>	
Population I= 3 (2%)	
Population II= 59 (4%)	

22. Do you have health insurance coverage?*Yes, I have health insurance through my employer*

Population I= 45 (31%)

Population II= 331 (25%)

Yes, I have health insurance through my spouse's employer

Population I= 4 (3%)

Population II= 47 (4%)

I don't know

Population I= 1 (1%)

Population II= 30 (2%)

Yes, through another program (state or county)

Population I= 48 (33%)

Population II= 528 (40%)

No, I have no health insurance at all

Population I= 36 (25%)

Population II= 340 (26%)

Invalid response

Population I= 10 (7%)

Population II= 47 (4%)

23. If you have children living with you, what type of health insurance do they have?*I do not have children living with me*

Population I= 1 (1%)

Population II= 0 (0%)

Through my or my spouse's employer

Population I= 26 (18%)

Population II= 148 (11%)

Healthy Kids/Medicaid

Population I= 78 (54%)

Population II= 851 (64%)

Invalid response

Population I= 8 (6%)

Population II= 59 (4%)

My children do not have any type of health insurance

Population I= 4 (3%)

Population II= 70 (5%)

Through my or my spouse's employer and Healthy Kids/Medicaid

Population I= 14 (10%)

Population II= 119 (9%)

MIChild

Population I= 8 (6%)

Population II= 27 (2%)

24. What is your regular hourly pay? If you are not currently employed, fill in your last hourly wage.**\$0**

Population I= 8 (6%)

Population II= 118 (9%)

\$5.01-\$6.00

Population I= 14 (10%)

Population II= 144 (11%)

\$7.01-\$8.00

Population I= 15 (10%)

Population II= 174 (13%)

\$9.01-\$10.00

Population I= 17 (12%)

Population II= 74 (6%)

Invalid response

Population I= 1 (1%)

Population II= 2 (0%)

\$0.01-\$5.00

Population I= 3 (2%)

Population II= 60 (5%)

\$6.01-\$7.00

Population I= 17 (12%)

Population II= 173 (13%)

\$8.01-\$9.00

Population I= 14 (10%)

Population II= 137 (10%)

\$10.00 +

Population I= 23 (16%)

Population II= 120 (9%)

25. During the past 12 months, was there ever a time when you were not able to pay the mortgage, rent or utility bills?**Yes**

Population I= 78 (54%)

Population II= 671 (51%)

I don't remember

Population I= 4 (3%)

Population II= 25 (2%)

No

Population I= 57 (40%)

Population II= 605 (46%)

Invalid response

Population I= 5 (3%)

Population II= 22 (2%)

How many times were you unable to pay one of these?

0	1
Population I= 19 (13%)	Population I= 13 (9%)
Population II= 61 (5%)	Population II= 98 (7%)
2	3
Population I= 18 (13%)	Population I= 8 (6%)
Population II= 164 (12%)	Population II= 143 (11%)
4	5
Population I= 6 (4%)	Population I= 6 (4%)
Population II= 79 (6%)	Population II= 41 (3%)
6+	
Population I= 8 (6%)	
Population II= 85 (6%)	

26. If you are not currently employed, for what reasons are you not employed? (Circle all that apply)

<i>I cannot find work</i>	<i>I had problems with child care</i>
Population I= 7 (5%)	Population I= 4 (3%)
Population II= 51 (4%)	Population II= 41 (3%)
<i>I had an illness in the family</i>	<i>I was laid off</i>
Population I= 1 (1%)	Population I= 7 (5%)
Population II= 22 (2%)	Population II= 54 (4%)
<i>I moved away from the area</i>	<i>I cannot find a job that offers enough hours for me to work</i>
Population I= 1 (1%)	Population I= 6 (4%)
Population II= 8 (1%)	Population II= 17 (1%)
<i>Hourly wage too low</i>	<i>I am going to school</i>
Population I= 6 (4%)	Population I= 3 (2%)
Population II= 34 (3%)	Population II= 12 (1%)
<i>I was fired</i>	<i>I was sick, injured or had a new baby</i>
Population I= 4 (3%)	Population I= 10 (7%)
Population II= 28 (2%)	Population II= 103 (8%)
<i>My job was seasonal</i>	
Population I= 2 (1%)	
Population II= 18 (1%)	

Now we would like to ask you if you feel you and your family are better off, worse off or about the same in the following categories than when you were receiving cash assistance from the state.

**27. Household income
Do you feel you are**

<i>Better off</i>
Population I= 61 (42%)
Population II= 592 (45%)
<i>Worse off</i>
Population I= 26 (18%)
Population II= 204 (15%)
<i>The same</i>
Population I= 51 (35%)
Population II= 479 (36%)
<i>Invalid response</i>
Population I= 6 (4%)
Population II= 48 (4%)

**28. Your housing condition
Do you feel you are**

<i>Better off</i>
Population I= 48 (33%)
Population II= 415 (31%)
<i>Worse off</i>
Population I= 15 (10%)
Population II= 128 (10%)
<i>The same</i>
Population I= 75 (52%)
Population II= 734 (55%)
<i>Invalid response</i>
Population I= 6 (4%)
Population II= 46 (3%)

29. Your food and nutrition needs

Do you feel you are

Better off

Population I= 39 (27%)

Population II= 376 (28%)

The same

Population I= 73 (51%)

Population II= 657 (50%)

Invalid response

Population I= 4 (3%)

Population II= 43 (3%)

Worse off

Population I= 28 (19%)

Population II= 247 (19 %)

30. Health care for your child or children, if your children live with you

Do you feel you are

Better off

Population I= 36 (25%)

Population II= 384 (29%)

The same

Population I= 83 (58%)

Population II= 755 (57%)

Invalid response

Population I= 7 (5%)

Population II= 69 (5%)

Worse off

Population I= 18 (13%)

Population II= 115 (9%)

31. Access to health insurance coverage

Do you feel you are

Better off

Population I= 40 (28%)

Population II= 350 (26%)

The same

Population I= 65 (45%)

Population II= 672 (51%)

Invalid response

Population I= 11 (8%)

Population II= 69 (5)

Worse off

Population I= 28 (19%)

Population II= 232 (18%)

32. Did being in Work First help you with any of the following? (Circle all that apply)

Improving job skills

Population I= 32 (22%)

Population II= 270 (20%)

Getting a higher paying job

Population I= 18 (13%)

Population II= 180 (14%)

Finding a job

Population I= 64 (44%)

Population II= 514 (39%)

Keeping a job

Population I= 25 (17%)

Population II= 250 (19%)

33. Would you say that being in Work First helped your family with any of the following things? (Circle all that apply)

Money management and budgeting

Population I= 19 (13%)

Population II= 234 (18%)

Getting health insurance

Population I= 15 (10%)

Population II= 145 (11%)

Getting better health care

Population I= 7 (5%)

Population II= 102 (8%)

Paying your bills on time

Population I= 17 (12%)

Population II= 185 (14%)

Getting better housing

Population I= 7 (5%)

Population II= 99 (7%)

Getting better dental care

Population I= 8 (6%)

Population II= 95 (7%)

ATTACHMENT 2: FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY

A focus group was held in Lansing on January 16, 2001 consisting of six people who attended Work First between October 1, 1999 and June 30, 2000. The purpose of the focus group was to gather anecdotal information about their experiences with Work First. All of the participants were employed. They were from a mixture of ethnic backgrounds. Three of them were single mothers, two were a married couple and one was a married man. They were asked to indicate their general satisfaction with the various services offered through Work First and were asked for suggestions on how those services could be improved. Three IHSR staff members and one MDCD Workforce Development staff member attended the focus group. The participants appreciated being able to share their comments with her. Since each Michigan Works! Agency is a bit different, it should be noted that the results of the focus groups are based on experiences of people in Lansing only.

CURRENT SERVICES

Most participants reported that the staff at Work First were very helpful and attentive to their needs. In general they found the Work First services to be helpful, especially resume-writing assistance. Other services mentioned as useful were job interviewing tips, practice interviews, assistance with transportation and clothing, and providing facilities for making phone calls, faxing and copying. People who had participated previously in Work First indicated that program services have improved and were more useful in securing a job than their experience several years ago. Participants who received the computer-training grant felt this training was extremely useful in providing them with more marketable skills for the labor market. They indicated that the training also helped give them the confidence that they could succeed in finding and keeping a job. Several of them commented that they missed the health coverage provided through Medicaid and that they made too much money to qualify for other programs.

SUGGESTED IMPROVEMENTS

Participants were not satisfied with the Work First job bank. They indicated that the jobs on this registry never changed and had unrealistic requirements. They also would like to see more types of jobs listed that require different types skills and training. With one exception, all participants indicated that they found their jobs on their own. One participant mentioned that she thought the Work First computer system was not very user-friendly but the others said they thought it was fine.

Some of the participants indicated that there should be more flexibility in requiring participation in Work First. One focus group participant stated that he sought government assistance when he had a medical procedure and could not work for a while. He was committed to returning to work for his same employer after recuperation, which he did do. He did not think it was a good use of Work First resources to require that he look for a job when he already had one.

Some of the participants indicated that other Work First requirements should be changed. They suggested that Work First participants should have more flexibility in where they can acquire work clothes instead of having to shop at a limited number of stores. Other participants indicated that it would be very helpful if the program assisted participants purchase an automobile for transportation to work. Transportation to work was mentioned as an obstacle to employment by some participants. Several of the participants indicated that they had jobs when they applied for assistance and that in some cases Work First attendance requirements created problems maintaining that job. There was a comment that sometimes the Work First requirement that participants attend the Work First location nearest to their address forced them to stop going to a location where they had already established a good working relationship with staff.

SUMMARY

Overall, participants found that Work First gave them opportunities they would not otherwise have had, even though they felt forced to attend. One single mother indicated that she felt she would never have been able to quit working in a bar because of her education and skill level. She said that before she went to Work First, employers looking for office staff would “laugh at her” when she gave them her resume. She said that the assistance Work First provided her in the preparation of her resume and providing the computer training grant led to a career in the computer industry and promotion to a supervisory position. She said that Work First was a “great experience.”

Another woman indicated that because of Work First, she has maintained a job and been off welfare for over a year. She said that she was “proud of herself” as a result of being off welfare and that this was the longest she had ever been in the same job. She indicated that she thought it was beneficial for young single mothers like her to be forced to get out into the work force. She felt they could benefit from Work First services.